

THE
Dramatic and Literary Censor,
FOR
JULY 1801.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS OF

Dr. WOLCOTT,

More generally known by the appellation of PETER PINDAR.

(WITH AN ENGRAVING.)

IT is a task of no easy achievement to draw a faithful and characteristic sketch of authors, who for a long series of years have been engaged in the career of literary warfare, and acts of personal aggression. The violence of outraged feeling, on the part of those who suffer under the lash of the satirist, naturally impels to recrimination and revenge. Where talents are not equal to bold and open combat, recourse is had to calumny, to misrepresentation, to falsehood and to fraud. Once set in motion, slander acquires strength and increase with every step; or, to adopt the energetic language of the Mantuan bard,

"*Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo.*"

To meet such a growing accumulation of libels; to probe, to scrutinize, to detect and refute them *singly*, and to weigh every rumour in the just balance of truth, is not within the compass of individual effort, however great and comprehensive may be the powers of the party against whom these libels are raised and propagated. Hence they acquire the guise and hue of plausibility and truth; the world misconstrues silence into acquiescence and acknowledgment, and an impression is made upon the public mind at large, which it is difficult, if not impracticable, totally to eradicate and efface.

VOL. I.

B

Nor

Nor is it from the side of enemies alone, that these obstacles to a faithful delineation of character result. The injudicious zeal of friends, likewise, contributes its full and ample share. In proportion to the violence with which a public writer is attacked by his foes, in the same proportion is his character maintained and exalted by his partizans and admirers. These too, in the warmth of their attachment, scruple not to magnify and invent. Thus a double source of misrepresentation is generated, which still further aggravates and enhances the difficulty of drawing the line of demarcation between truth and falsehood, between fact and fiction.

These remarks apply with peculiar weight and cogency to the subject of our present Biographical Memoir. Few writers have more daringly provoked aggression on the one hand, or been more grossly attacked, villified, and misrepresented in return, than the gentleman long known to the literary world by the self-adopted appellation of *Peter Pindar*. Various, we might almost say innumerable, are the slanderous anecdotes circulated against him by his enemies, a great part of which, for want of opportune detection and timely refutation, have obtained general credit. Few, on the other hand, are his apologists. We have, indeed, met with two or three sketches of this gentleman's life, evidently drawn by a friendly hand; but the outline is so feebly touched, and the colouring so overcharged, that the personal likeness and individual similitude are scarcely to be recognized. Indiscriminate praise has justly been termed "the worst of censure;" it not only defeats its own purpose; but, in the words of Milton —"like a dev'lish engine, back recoils,"—and overwhelms with disgrace the very person, whom it professes to succour and protect.

We, therefore, who draw our information from genuine
and

and authentic sources ; who speak from local knowledge, and from enquiries urged with critical precision, and subtle heed,—who have no personal bias to warp and mislead our judgment,—who neither rank among the friends nor the enemies of the gentleman in question, (having neither smarted under his lash, nor been honoured with his acquaintance,) we, it is presumed, may, without arrogance, be allowed to flatter ourselves, that a Biographical Memoir, sketched under such circumstances, and totally exempt from even the remotest imputation of partiality, will prove an acceptable offering to our readers and the literary world in general.

JOHN WOLCOTT, M. D. was born in the little town of Dodbrook, near Kingsbridge, in Devonshire, in the year 1740. He received the first rudiments of his education at a grammar school in Kingsbridge, under the tuition of a Mr. MORRIS, a gentleman of very respectable attainments, who belonged to the religious society generally known by the name of Quakers. He next removed to his uncle, an apothecary in considerable practice and repute at Fowey, in Cornwall, who placed him at Mr. Hayden's seminary at Lisheard, and afterwards at the Rev. Mr. Fisher's academy at Bodmin, where he completed his education. His uncle being a single man, and entertaining for his nephew the affection of a parent, determined to spare no expence in qualifying our bard to move in a more exalted sphere of life than that of a country practitioner. In this view he sent him to France, where Mr. WOLCOTT, with a thorough knowledge of the French language, acquired those accomplishments and habits which are essential to the character of a gentleman. On his return from France, his uncle took him under his own immediate care and guidance, and our hero applied himself to the study of physic, with the laudable ambition of raising himself to the head

head of the medical profession, and exchanging the *pestle and mortar* for the *Doctor's Diploma*.

Accordingly, after having availed himself of all the opportunities of instruction which the country afforded him, he repaired to London, where he walked the hospitals, and diligently attended the best medical, anatomical, and chymical lectures.

From the metropolis we must now follow our hero to Jamaica, whither he accompanied Sir William Trelawny, the governor, to whom he was distantly related, and from whom he received the appointment of physician-general to the island. In the course of their voyage, they touched at the Madeiras, where the luxuriant scenery of nature appears to have inspired his imagination with true poetic fire, to which he gave vent in some beautiful sonnets, replete with feeling, tenderness, and taste. To this circumstance, trifling as it may appear to superficial observers, our hero's subsequent literary career may in a great measure be ascribed. The flame which fired his fancy proceeded from the *heart*; and the *head* acted but in obedience to, and under the influence of the nobler seat of passion.

After practising physic for some time, with considerable reputation and success in Jamaica, our hero was induced by the governor, with whom he stood in high favour, to revisit England, for the purpose of making interest for a lucrative appointment in the Church. The incumbent of the most valuable living in the island was momentarily expected to pay the last debt to nature; and the governor, with whom the nomination rested, promised the reversion to our hero; but under the express condition (for he bore a great aversion to the cloth) that he should never exhibit the smallest symptom or appearance of the parson out of the pulpit. In acceding to these terms, the doctor certainly

tainly did not offer any very great violence to his natural disposition; but unfortunately for his future prospects, the dying incumbent began to mend and recover, the moment he was deprived of the professional attendance of his physician; and our hero, on his return from England, had the mortification to find him not only alive and merry, but perfectly cured of all his old complaints. In short, the parson lived to bury the governor, and thus gave the death blow to our hero's hopes of church* preferment.

* From this plain and faithful statement we beg leave to call the reader's attention to Mr. Gifford's exposition of the case, which will afford them an opportunity of seeing how a simple story may be perverted to serve the purposes of malice and revenge. After representing Dr. WOLCOTT's voyage to Jamaica, and his appointment in that island, in the light of *transportation*, he thus descants on his conduct in reading prayers, at the express solicitation of the governor, during the indisposition of the regular clergyman:

“ *He play'd one master-trick to crown the whole,*
“ *And took, Oh heav'ns! the sacerdotal stole!*
* * * * * * * *
“ *Then rose the people, passive now no more,*
“ *And from his limbs the sacred vestments tore;*
“ *Dragg'd him with groans, shouts, hisses, to the main,*
“ *And sent him to annoy these realms again.”*

Gifford's Epistle to Pindar, p. 52.

As far as *fiction* comes within the province of poetry, (of which it has, indeed, been termed the very soul,) Mr. Gifford's verses may certainly lay claim to the title; for there is not an atom of truth in the whole passage. So far from being expelled the island with disgrace, Doctor WOLCOTT left it only for a few months, with a view of bettering his fortune; and returning to Jamaica, continued to exercise his professional talents with increasing repute, till the death of his patron. From this one instance the reader may form a just estimate of Mr. Gifford's veracity, and the reliance which ought to be placed in the assertions of such a venal and unprincipled libeller.

On

On the death of the governor, our hero, after a four years residence in Jamaica, took his leave of that island, and accompanied his Excellency's widow, Lady Trelawny, to England. Not having secured an independance, he returned to his family connections at Truro in Cornwall, where he resumed his medical practice. It was during his abode at this place that he met with the man, who now calls himself OPIE, and whom the doctor raised from the obscure and abject state of a *sawyer*, to the high and dignified rank he now holds, as a member of the *Royal Academy*, and one of the greatest painters of the age. As no correct narrative of the doctor's first acquaintance and connection with this artist has hitherto appeared in print; but, on the contrary, the whole of the transaction has been made the subject of much and frequent misrepresentation, we shall enter into a circumstantial detail, pledging ourselves for the truth of every assertion we advance.

The doctor being on a professional visit in the neighbouring parish of St. Agnes, happened to fall into conversation with the lady of the house on the subject of painting, when the latter, pointing to a well-known print representing a farm-yard, informed him, that there was a sawyer's lad in the parish who greatly admired that picture, and who had copied several figures from it. The doctor, who is not only an enthusiast in the Fine Arts, but himself a very able proficient, immediately enquired the lad's name, and where he worked. Having satisfied himself on these points, he repaired to the saw-pit, where he found OPPY (for that is our painter's *real* appellation) and his father at their manual employment. On questioning the lad about his performances, young OPPY told him, that he painted *blazing stars!* *Duke William!* *King and Queen!* and *Mrs. Nankivell's cat!* The drollness of the lad, and the discordance between his general awkwardness

of

of manner, and the ideas which the mention of the Fine Arts naturally awakens in the mind, still further excited the Doctor's curiosity to behold a specimen of his abilities. JACK OPPY needed not much intreaty; but tucking his leathern apron round his loins, bounced over the hedge, and quickly returned, with Mrs. Nankivell's *cat*, a *red lion*, and part of a *huge devil*, the *monstrosity* of which (for it was equipped with a most tremendous pair of horns, ass's ears, and large staring eyes that blazed like a comet) caused the doctor to burst out into a horse laugh, and put him in such complete good-humour, that he desired the lad to call at his house the following Sunday. Young OPPY was punctual to the appointment, and the Doctor furnished him with some materials for painting, such as brushes, colours, &c. OPPY repeated his visits for several Sundays, till at last the Doctor, finding some indications of genius in his productions, applied himself seriously to give him practical instruction. He now accommodated his pupil with a bed, gave him the run of his house, provided him with models for his imitation, and corrected his rude sketches with his own hand. OPPY now improved rapidly, and in about eight months was able to paint a decent *head*. For some time the Doctor was in doubt to what particular branch of the art to direct his studies; but rightly considering that there was very little chance of perfecting his pupil in drawing, at such a distance from the metropolis, he resolved to teach him light and shade, and to make a *Rembrandt* of his scholar. Personal vanity, he was well aware, afforded his pupil a better prospect of success, in the line of portrait-painting, than he could possibly expect from his best directed efforts in landscape. He therefore employed him principally on portraits, and at the expiration of twelve months our young artist began to reap the fruits of

his

his ingenuity, by painting half-lengths, at the rate of five shillings per head.

Meanwhile that the Doctor was thus training his pupil in the Fine Arts, he was not less attentive to the necessary cultivation of his mind. In the intervals of his professional occupations, he taught OPPY to read and write; endeavoured to polish his manners; to divest him of his coarse and clownish habits, and to give him the air and semblance of a gentleman. This was, by far, the most difficult part of the task which the Doctor had imposed upon himself; for here he had no natural disposition to second his efforts; but, on the contrary, was working directly against the grain. It was a labour analogous to that of *Sisyphus*--it was rolling, with Herculean might, a vast unwieldly stone up hill, against the laws of gravitation, and which constantly mocked his toil, and by its own weight forced itself back to its native and congenial situation at the bottom. OPPY's connections lying entirely among the lowest orders, and there being a genteel family in the county of the name of OPIE, the Doctor, sensible of the force of prejudice, and the value of alliance, persuaded his pupil to borrow the name of OPIE, and to keep it till it should be called for. He then purchased for him a decent suit of clothes, a ruffled shirt, and a cocked hat, and after drilling him with extreme patience and application in the various forms and ceremonial usages of good-breeding, such as the manner of making a bow; how to dispose of his hands, without thrusting them into his breeches, (which had from time immemorial been OPPY's habitual practice) with various other similar points of *etiquette*, introduced him to several families of distinction, who, on the Doctor's recommendation, warmly patronized the young artist, and gave him sufficient employment for the exercise of his talents.

Once

Once set afloat, OPPY, or OPIE, as we shall now style him, had only to swim with the tide. His fame increased daily, and every day, in the same proportion, brought a fresh accession of custom. In about six months he raised his price, at the Doctor's counsel, from 5s. to 7s.; then to half-a-guinea; next to fifteen shillings; and at last to one guinea per head. During the term of his pupilage, the Doctor had systematically endeavoured to direct his ambition to two grand leading points. The first, to aim at being at the head of his profession; the second, to succour his parents, and let them participate in whatever good fortune might attend himself. To these injunctions, he added a third, founded on the discovery of certain physical propensities, natural to youth, viz. not to take advantage of the Doctor's necessary absence from home to debauch his maid-servant. In how far OPIE paid due observance to the latter command, we have not been able to ascertain; but the two preceding maxims appear to have made a strong and indelible impression on his mind. The productions of his pencil have justly ranked him among the most eminent artists of the age; and to his honour we must bear testimony, that with the improvement of his circumstances, he liberally supplied the wants of his father and mother, and acted the part of an affectionate brother towards his sister, whom he took from servitude.

So rapid was the progress which OPIE, under the Doctor's auspices, made in the art of painting, that some of the pictures which he executed in Cornwall, particularly those he painted for the late Mr. Price, of Penzance, are esteemed by the *connoisseurs* equal, if not superior, to any of his subsequent productions. All these, as we have already observed, were finished under the Doctor's immediate direction; whence it appears that the vaunt, so industriously raised and propagated by OPIE himself, of his having started, all of a

sudden, a self-taught, self-created genius, is a mere fable, which reflects little credit on the *head*, and still less credit on the *heart* of the arrogant pretender. It exposes at once the weakness, and what is still more reprehensible, the ingratitude of the man, who could thus easily forget his obligations to the friend who raised him from the dunghill, and endeavour to obliterate the remembrance of services, which it ought to be his highest gratification, and his pride, to acknowledge and extol.

But it was not merely by fostering, patronizing, and directing **OPIE**'s talents, in the first instance,---not merely by promoting his interest in the country, that our Doctor rendered himself the main instrument of that artist's fortune and advancement in life. He continued his good offices, and most actively befriended his pupil on their arrival in the metropolis, where **OPIE** must otherwise have long remained an *isolated* being; having no acquaintance, no connexions in town. **OPIE** had painted a beautiful picture of an old beggar, which the Doctor exhibited to Mrs. Boscawen, the present widow of the late gallant admiral of that name, requesting the lady to use her interest in favour of the artist, whom he described as a youth of genius. Mrs. Boscawen, with that prompt zeal to aid and befriend merit, which distinguishes her amiable character, introduced the picture to the notice of her numerous circle of acquaintance, among whom was the late Mrs. Delaney, who took an opportunity of submitting it to the inspection of their Majesties. **OPIE** was immediately ordered to wait upon the Royal Family with his pictures, at Buckingham-House. This at once stamped his reputation; he had now his hands full of employment; but unfortunately not having sacrificed at the shrine of the Graces, his male-portraits were not *gentlemen*, nor his women *ladies*! Hence the extravagant patronage he at first experienced, gradu-

ally

ally began to cool. Steeled and habituated to nature, in its most rugged, its terrific and repulsive forms, he has no relish for its softer beauties, no conception of delicacy and refined elegance. The ladies, of course, felt little ambition to have their features traced by the pencil of a man, whose genius accords better with the depiction of a blood-stained assassin, or a wrinkled hag, than with the expression of female loveliness and graceful form.

Return we now from this digression, (the importance of which, we trust, will most amply compensate for the length of detail into which we have unavoidably been drawn) to our Memoirs of the Doctor. After an abode of nearly four years at Truro, he removed to the borough town of Helston, where he practised physic two or three years longer. But not content with the emoluments of a country practice, and dissatisfied with *still life*, he repaired in conjunction with his pupil OPIE, to the metropolis in the year 1780, where he has ever since fixed his stationary residence.

On their first arrival in London, the Doctor and OPIE, both of them single men, entered into a system of joint-house-keeping. A common purse was set apart for their domestic expences, to which each contributed an equal proportion of their professional receipts. This fair and amicable adjustment, which was equally calculated for the comfort and convenience of both parties, has been twisted and perverted by malicious misrepresentation into a charge against the Doctor of having meanly lived upon the earnings of his pupil. Among the rest, Gifford, whose envenomed and leprous heart absorbs, as congenial aliment, every libel, every tale of scandal, as eagerly as a sponge imbibes liquid, has not scrupled to * retail this accusation

* See Gifford's *Epistle to Pindar*, page 9.

in that “ bloated mass” of falsehood and lampoon, which he lately published against the Doctor, under the title of a Poetical Epistle. After the specimen we have already presented to our readers, of the scrupulous regard which this literary caitiff pays to truth, they will be enabled to estimate how much reliance they may venture to place on his authority, when he accuses the doctor of “ living on the “ talents of a man whom he ostentatiously *affected* to pa-“ tronize, under the express condition of receiving one “ half of the produce of his labours.” The man who can describe such a persevering system of encouragement and instruction as the Doctor adopted towards OPIE, as the mere *affectation* of patronage, deserves very little credit for the rest of his assertions. He compromizes alike his judgment and his veracity. But dismissing Gifford, with his whole budget and *farrago* of lies, we shall only add on this subject, that this domestic partnership between the Doctor and OPIE, was in the sequel dissolved by the latter, after he had sufficiently extended his connexions, to dispense with the further aid of his first and warmest patron. This circumstance took place during the Doctor’s absence in the country, and was signified to him by letter.

The Doctor had not mixed long in the bustling scenes of metropolitan life, before he engaged in an active career of literary warfare. His first production was a *Supplicating Epistle to the Reviewers*, published in the year 1782, in which he gave a competent specimen of those powers of satire and resistless ridicule, which have since rendered his name and writings so formidable. The *Royal Academy* constituted the next object of attack ; and here certainly our author had a fair field for the exercise of his talents. Practically acquainted with the art on which he criticized, and justly reprobating the perverted system on which the *Academy* proceeded, he scourged them with the relentless severity

severity their misconduct merited. In the year 1786, he published the *Lousiad*, a work which may justly be considered as the *chef d'œuvre* of his performances. The event which gave rise to this ludicrous and truly excellent mock-heroic poem, is too universally known to need recapitulation. Suffice it, therefore, to observe, that from the information we have been able to collect, it was not merely the appearance of a *hair*, but a *bonâ fide LIVING ANIMAL*, on the Royal plate, which occasioned an edict to be issued for all the cooks and other menials employed in the Royal Kitchen, to have their heads shaved. This decree was incontinently carried into execution, *maugrè recalcitrance* and remonstrance. Nor was the operation confined exclusively to the kitchen. Whilst the poor cooks were undergoing the sentence of enraged Majesty, a large groupe of domestics from various other offices appertaining to the Royal Household, collected together, to witness and deride the sufferings of their afflicted brethren. This circumstance being notified to the King, his Majesty immediately issued an *Appendix* to his former edict, “*Shave them too!*” he exclaimed, and a proper authority was instantly dispatched to superintend and enforce the performance of the Royal Mandate. On this transaction our author has built one of the finest pieces of humour the English language can boast. The success attendant on this publication, was fully commensurate to its extraordinary merit. It has gone through a variety of editions; has circulated in every part of the kingdom; nor to this kingdom alone has been confined its fame. It has travelled on the wings of wind to America*; it has been read with avidity

* The following anecdote we give to our readers as a fact, the truth of which we can vouch for. During the *official* residence of his

avidity on the continent of Europe, and has recently been translated into the German language by the celebrated GOETHE of Weimar, the well-known and justly-admired author of the *Sorrows of Werter*.

To trace our author through the whole series of his* numerous publications, and to enter into an individual analysis of their merits, would be at once a very tedious and

his Royal Highness the DUKE of KENT, in North America, he went out on a shooting-party in the woods, when being separated from his attendants, he entered a lonely cottage, where he found a pretty young lass, apparently about seventeen, amusing herself with reading. His Royal Highness felt his curiosity excited to know the subject of her studies, and accordingly enquired the title of the book. " La ! Sir," replied the simple damsels, not aware of his rank, " we " read nothing here, but *Peter Pindar*, and the *Bible*!"

* The subjoined Catalogue, we believe, will be found to contain an accurate and nearly complete list of our author's works :

1. Supplicating Epistle to the Reviewers.
2. Lyric Odes to the Royal Academicians, for 1782.
3. Ditto —————— 1783.
4. Ditto —————— 1785.
5. Farewell Ode to Ditto —————— 1786.
6. The Lousiad.
7. Epistle to James Boswell.
8. Bozzi and Piozzi.
9. Ode upon Ode ; or, a Peep at St. James's.
10. Apologetic Postscript to Ode upon Ode.
11. Instructions to a celebrated Laureat.
12. Brother Peter to Brother Tom.
13. Peter's Prophecy.
14. Peter's Pension.
15. Sir Joseph Banks and the Emperor of Morocco,
16. Epistle to a falling Minister.
17. Subjects for Painters.
18. Expostulatory Odes.
19. Benevolent Epistle to Master John Nicholls.
20. A Rowland for an Oliver.
21. Advice

and unprofitable task. The works of the facetious *Peter Pindar* have been so generally read, and the public opinion is so well made up, as to their prevailing character, that all further discussion on this point becomes unne-

-
21. Advice to the future Laureat.
 22. Epistle to James Bruce, Esq.
 23. The Rights of Kings.
 24. The Remonstrance.
 25. More Money.
 26. Odes of Importance.
 27. The Tears of St. Margaret.
 28. A Pair of Lyric Epistles to Lord Macartney.
 29. Odes to Kien Long, the Emperor of Morocco.
 30. Epistle to the Pope.
 31. Pathetic Odes to the Duke of Richmond.
 32. Celebration.
 33. Pindariana.
 34. Hair-powder.
 35. Frogmore Fête.
 36. Royal Tour to Weymouth.
 37. Royal Visit to Exeter.
 38. Liberty's last Squeak.
 39. Tales of a Margate Hoy.
 40. Tears and Smiles.
 41. Nil Admirari ; or, a Smile at a Bishop.
 42. Lord Auckland's Triumph ; or, The Fall of Crim. Con.
 43. Out at Last.
 44. Odes to In's and Out's.
 45. Epistle to Count Rumford.

Independant of this extensive list of *original* publications, our author has superintended a new edition of *Pilkington's Dictionary of Painters*, with considerable additions and improvements. In these a judicious reader may easily trace the characteristics of *Peter's* pen. One article in particular (we allude to the *Biography* of WILSON, and more particularly to the closing remarks) is said to have given considerable offence in a *certain quarter*, where it was erroneously ascribed to a very different writer.

cessary

cessary. Whatever diversity of sentiment may obtain as to his political principles, and however a certain class of readers may be disposed to censure the freedom in which he has frequently permitted his Muse to indulge, especially with respect to the Constituted Authorities in Church and State; it is almost impossible for the most bigotted advocates of the *good old system of things*, to peruse his writings with a serious face. Even the high and august Personage himself, against whom his wanton sallies have been most pointedly directed, has been rather provoked to good-humour than to anger, by the merry, though petulant, effusions of our satiric bard. The only occasions on which any symptoms have appeared of indignation, have been when the penurious habits and degrading parsimony of the Palace have formed the theme of animadversion.

That a writer engaged in so active a career of personal aggression should raise up a host of adversaries, and meet with frequent rebuffs, is by no means a matter of surprize. Justly, indeed, might it excite our astonishment were the case to be otherwise. This species of recrimination is perfectly fair, provided the parties keep within the bounds of decorum, and conduct their literary warfare with the spirit and the manners of gentlemen. But when they pass these sacred limits, they degrade the cause of literature, and convert the *academic field* into a *bear-garden*.

On this subject, it is impossible for us to pass over in silence the late memorable dispute between our author and a certain hireling libeller of the name of Gifford. That *Peter* stands wholly acquitted of blame and misconduct in this affair, we pretend not to assert. To reproach a man, who by dint of persevering toil has raised himself from obscurity into notice, with the baseness of his origin, is highly indecorous and illiberal. The greater, the more numerous the difficulties a man has to encounter, in work-

ing

ing his way to eminence and distinction, the greater, by fair argument, is the merit of the action, the more honorable his success. If, therefore, Gifford has, by his own endeavour, paralleled the example of the late *Chiswell-Street Bookseller*, and, like him, claims for his motto the “*Sutor ultra crepidam feliciter ausus!*” it redounds to his credit and his praise. Thus far we conceive Gifford to have stood on just and high ground, and warranted in returning the attack of his enemy.

But when from fair and manly assault, he not only descends to ribaldry, but, sinking still deeper in infamy, from ribaldry; proceeds to filth, and rakes the very refuse of the stews; when not content with heaping libel upon libel, he has recourse to the most diabolical and fiend-like system of revenge; and publickly charges his opponent with a crime, at which manhood shudders, at the very time that he knows the charge to be false and malicious; when a person pretending to the name of a scholar, can thus act, he forfeits his claim to the title, forfeits his claim to humanity, and by his own voluntary act and deed proclaims himself a wretch that ought to be proscribed from all civilized society, and branded as a monster. For such atrocity the pillory, broken bones, and *sexual mutilation*, can scarcely be deemed adequate punishment.

The grounds on which our author's character has been principally attacked, may be summarily reduced to three leading charges. In the first place, he has been accused of *atheism*, or, in general terms, of *irreligion**. Secondly,

VOL. I.

D

of

* The manner in which Gifford brings forward and supports this charge against our author, is of a nature so sovereignly ridiculous, that it tends rather to provoke our laughter, than serious animadversion. Poor Peter is at once branded an *atheist*,—nay, more! he is villified as a *monster*, because he is so well satisfied with that world in which

God

of an *inordinate love of pleasure*; and thirdly, of *political apostacy*. With respect to the first of these three indictments, we have only to observe, that in the present day, such a total change, such a complete revolution has happily taken place in the minds of the great mass of mankind, as to religious prejudices, that we scarcely conceive the charge worth meeting. The more enlightened orders of society may justly be said to have no religion at all. They leave it to sanctified hypocrites, sour-faced, disappointed prudes, and hopeless debility. *Peter* has too much honesty, to *act the hypocrite!*—too much taste, to affect the *withered prude!*—too much relish for enjoyment, to join the standard of *impotent devotion!*

In his homage of beauty, *Peter* is a perfect enthusiast. If this, therefore, be a crime—if it be a crime to have *eyes to admire!* and a *heart to feel!*—if the physical propensities implanted for wise and salutary purposes in our nature, are to form the ground of charge and accusation against us, where is the man of *sound organization*, of *constitution warm*, and *perfect limb*, that would not wish to be involved in the charge? that would not be ambitious to

God has placed him, and still retains his powers of enjoyment so perfectly unimpaired, (which his adversary, we should suppose, does not,) that he could be content to live in it five hundred years! But let us hear Gifford himself on this subject:

“ This man, or rather this *monster in human shape*, is in the habit “ of expressing a wish, that *God would grant him a lease of his life for five hundred years!*” Gifford’s Epistle to Pindar, p. 8.

If the entertaining of a wish of this nature constitutes an *atheist*, and converts man into a *monster*, we are apt to think that the number of *atheists* and *monsters in human shape*, will considerably exceed the muster-roll of *Religionists*, whose ranks, we fear, will be reduced entirely to such, as through natural debility, or intemperate habits, have *outlived the sense of enjoyment*, and now sicken at the sight of those pleasures, in others, in which themselves no longer can participate.

plead.

plead " guilty" to such an indictment? Different, essentially different, is the effect produced by the contemplation of female beauty upon men of different habits and pursuits. Essentially different the emotions of the *voluptuary* and the *pimp**. Essentially different the feelings and sensations of the man who caters for his *own palate*, and the wretch who panders for the appetite of *others*! Essentially different the ideas of the man who covets beauty for his *own enjoyment*, and feasts his *own eyes* with the delectable prospect, and those of the recreant, who views beauty merely as an article of traffic, and is solely employed in casting up the extent of the sum for which he may draw upon the pampered epicure that employs him, and for whose gratification he ransacks the West-country waggons, which from this circumstance have not unaptly acquired the appellation of *West-Country Bawdy-Houses*, (*sapienti sat!*) in quest of *Welch haymakers*! This very partiality to the female sex, which Gifford urges as an accusation against PINDAR, constitutes of itself a sufficient evidence of the falsehood and malignity of the diabolical charge to which we have before, with befitting severity, alluded.

With respect to the third and last charge, that of *political apostacy*, we do not deny, that a negotiation was set on foot, and partly acceded to, by our author, to purchase his *silence*, in consideration of a handsome annuity. The parties principally concerned in adjusting the terms of this convention were Mr. L——g, of the Treasury; Mr. H——t,

* " I may have said, that when a man receives subscription-money for a work, which he has no intention to produce, he is a *literary swindler*, and deserves the rope. I may have asserted, the dirtiest of all occupations is a *Pimp!*" *Postscript to Lord Auckland's Triumph.*

the ostensible proprietor of a notorious party-serving Newspaper ; and Mr. J. T——r, a worthy co-adjutor and fellow-labourer in the vineyard. But the provisions of the treaty did not extend to the length stated in Mr. Gifford's pamphlet. Instead of " recanting his principles, and " writing in opposition to those whom he had formerly " praised," our author merely engaged to remain *neuter*. The moment he found, that *more* was expected of him ; the moment a requisition was made upon his *active services*, that moment he threw up his engagement, disannulled the compact, and with honest indignation spurned the bribe which the satellites of power laboured to palm upon him.

To judge of the Doctor from present appearances, we should suppose him to have been a comely man in his youthful years. He has recently suffered severely from an asthmatic complaint, over which, we are happy to state, he has now, by skilful management, completely triumphed. In his professional capacity, as a medical gentleman, he has devoted particular study and attention to the organization of the ear, on which subject he entertains opinions very different from the tenets generally received. The theory of the *hammer* and *drum* of the ear, to which the perception of sound is attributed by most medical writers, he considers as a mere fable, and is said to have it in agitation to publish a treatise on the formation and treatment of the auricular organ.

In the private intercourse of social life, the Doctor is a very pleasing and instructive companion ; urbane in his manner, full of anecdote, without diverging into scandal, and witty, without asperity. He is understood to be in easy circumstances, though he has met with serious losses ; and among other reverses, is for the present deprived of the benefit of an agreement into which he entered with

Messrs.

Messrs. Robinson, Golding, and Walker, for the copyright of his works. In consequence of a dispute which has subsequently arisen on this point, the purchasers contending, that their bargain includes all his *future*, as well as his *past* publications, the business has been removed into the Court of Chancery, where in all human probability it will remain in a state of indecision and suspense, till the ingenious author of the publications in question, shall no longer survive to enjoy the fruits of his labours. Such, but too commonly, is the hard destiny of literary merit!

THEATRICAL RETROSPECT.

THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

THE Summer Campaign at this theatre opened under very propitious auspices, on Thursday, June 18th. The Manager has followed up the extraordinary success he experienced last season, not by launching out into unnecessary expences in the exterior and decorative department of the house, but by a liberal attention to more solid improvements, and by consulting rather the strength of his company, than puerile embellishment. In looking over the muster-roll of his dramatic *corps*, we miss two performers, who have been wont to act a conspicuous part at this theatre. These are Miss De Camp, and Mr. C. Kemble. To compensate for their loss, we find a very respectable, and, indeed, more than equiponderant accession of new engagements. Mr. Powell, from Drury-lane Theatre, succeeds to Mr. Aickin's line of parts. Mr. H. Johnston, from Covent-Garden, is, in our opinion, more than an equivalent for young Kemble; and Mrs. Mills, in light and volatile characters, especially as a *breeches figure*, ably supplies the place of our justly admired

mired favorite, Miss De Camp. Others of that actress's parts have been distributed between Mrs. Gibbs, Mrs. Mountain, Mrs. H. Johnstone, and Mrs. Litchfield—the two latter, new engagements. Yet still (so diversified are Miss De Camp's talents, and such her general excellence) there are certain characters in which a fair and adequate substitute has not yet been obtained.

In the *ballad-line* we have still to regret the absence of Mrs. Bland, for whom a competent successor will not easily be found. Some of her parts have been occasionally sustained by a young lady, of the name of Tyrer, of whose performances at the Covent-Garden *Lent Oratorios*, we made honorable mention in the *Dramatic Censor* for February last. She is a pupil of Mr. Kelly; and Kelly himself has re-appeared this season on the Haymarket boards, for the first time these three years, though we certainly cannot allow his acting to constitute any additional source of merit and attraction.

We now proceed to give a list or specification of the performances of each evening, to which we propose to annex such strictures on the changes which have taken place in the *cast* of the characters, and on the general merit of the acting, as the circumstances of the case shall appear to require.

1801.

JUNE.

Thursday, 18. } The Flitch of Bacon, *H. Bate*—The Point of Honour,
Opening Night. } *C. Kemble*—Fortune's Frolic, *Allingham*.

19. The Heir at Law, *G. Colman*—The Prisoner at large,
O'Keeffe.

20. The Road to Ruin, *T. Holcroft*—The Poor Soldier,
O'Keeffe.

Monday, 22. Sighs; or The Daughter, *P. Hoare*—The Review; or
The Wags of Windsor, *Colman*.

23. The London Hermit, *O'Keeffe*—The Review, &c.

24. The Jew, *Cumberland*—The Review, &c.

The

25. The Heir at Law, *Colman*—The Review, &c.
26. Cambro-Britons, *J. Boaden*—The Review, &c.
27. The Road to Ruin, *Holcroft*—The Review, &c.

Monday, 29. Fashionable Levities, *Mac Nally*—The Review, &c.
30. The Birth-Day, *T. Dibdin*—The Review, &c.

JULY.

- Wednesday,* 1. Ways and Means, *Colman*—The Review, &c.
2. The Heir at Law, *Colman*—The Review, &c.
3. Prisoner at large, *O'Keefe*—The Jew and the Doctor,
T. Dibdin—Obi; or Three-finger'd Jack, *Fawcett*.
4. Lover's Vows, *Mrs. Inchbald*—Obi, &c.
Monday, 6. The London Hermit, *O'Keefe*—Obi, &c.
7. The Point of Honour, *C. Kemble*—Obi, &c.
8. Sighs; or The Daughter, *P. Hoare*—Obi, &c.
9. The Heir at Law, *G. Colman*—Obi, &c.
10. False and True, —Obi, &c.
11. Lover's Vows, *Mrs. Inchbald*—Obi, &c.
Monday, 13. The Road to Ruin, *T. Holcroft*—Obi, &c:
14. The Surrender of Calais, *G. Colman*—The Review, &c.
15. Ways and Means, *G. Colman*—Obi, &c.
16. The Heir at Law, *G. Colman*—The Review, &c.
17. The Agreeable Surprise, *O'Keefe*—Fortune's Frolic,
Allingham—Obi, &c.
18. Surrender of Calais, *G. Colman*—The Review, &c.
Monday, 20. The Young Quaker, *O'Keefe*—Obi, &c.
21. Lover's Vows, *Mrs. Inchbald*—The Review, &c.
22. The Road to Ruin, *T. Holcroft*—Obi, &c.
23. The Heir at Law, *G. Colman*—Obi, &c.
24. The Point of Honour, *C. Kemble*—The Gipsy Prince,
C. Moore.

On glancing over the above list, the reader will at once perceive, that, with the exception of the musical entertainment of the *Gipsy Prince*, (the merits of which we shall anon proceed to investigate,) the season has not hitherto been productive of much dramatic novelty. One play, indeed, has been *transplanted* from its native soil of Covent-Garden, and another *revived*, after lying dormant two years. We allude, in the first instance, to

MAC

MAC NALLY's three-act comedy, entitled *Fashionable Levities**, performed for the first time on the Haymarket boards, Monday, June 29;—in the second, to the more modern drama of *False and True*. Neither of them, however, appear to hold out much future promise; nor do we, indeed, expect to witness their second representation.

This dearth of novelty, however, has been amply compensated by judicious selection; in proof of which we need only appeal to the crowded houses which the theatre nightly continues to draw, even to overflow. The pantomimical drama of *Obi*, with the truly whimsical, however incongruous, opera of the *Review*, have experienced, as our readers will perceive from the list of the performances, an almost unprecedented run; and surely no blame can attach to the manager for not burdening the theatre with unnecessary expence, in the production of new pieces, whilst his old stock retains, in full and undiminished force and efficacy, its pristine attractions. We know, indeed, that frequent abortive attempts have been made, through various channels, but more particularly in a certain *whip-syllabub* monthly publication, edited by a fretful, disappointed actor, whom, even the very tribunal, which he affects to despise, under the contemptuous appellation of the *House of Force*, would not

* As the transplantation of this theatrical exotic must necessarily have occasioned a material change in the *cast* of the characters, we subjoin a list of the *Dramatis Personæ*.—*Ordeal*, Mr. Powell.—*Welford*, Mr. Farley.—*Sir Buzzard Savage*, Mr. Emery.—*Capt. Douglass*, Mr. H. Johnston.—*Cheaterly*, Mr. J. Palmer.—*Colonel Staff*, Mr. Chippendale.—*Servant*, Mr. Abbot.—*Nicholas*, Mr. Fawcett.—*Clara*, Mrs. Gibbs.—*Widow Volatile*, Miss Leserve.—*Constance*, Miss Gaudry.—*Mrs. Muslin*, Mrs. Norton.—*Grace*, Mrs. Mills.—*Lady Flippant Savage*, Miss Chapman.

tolerate,

tolerate, to subject the Haymarket manager to obloquy and ridicule, by accusing him of *monopolizing* the theatre to himself, and *surfeiting* the town with his own productions. But whilst the town continues to admire this gentleman's writings, in preference to those of his co-temporaries; whilst his career continues to be marked with the most distinguished public favour, and till a dramatist of superior abilities starts up to supply his place, we conceive him not only perfectly justified, but acting within the strict line of duty, in representing such pieces, as have an acknowledged hold upon the countenance and the predilection of the audience, and which, from experience, have been found to draw, to gratify, and to attract.

From this kind of digressive retrospect of the nature of the performances, we now pass to a review of the merits of the performers themselves, as far as a change in the cast of the *Dramatis Personæ* has given them an opportunity of appearing in a new character. To avoid all invidious distinctions, we take them alphabetically; and accordingly shall commence our investigations with

MR. BARRYMORE.

The first novel character, in which this gentleman has presented himself to our critical observance this season, is that of *Baron Wildenhaim*, in *Lovers' Vows*, performed for the *first* time at this theatre, (and which, therefore, we ought to have associated in our general retrospect, as a *transplanted* drama, with the comedy of *Fashionable Levities*) on Saturday, July 4. The original representative of this part, as our readers must be well aware, is Mr. Murray, of Covent-Garden. It will, therefore, naturally be expected of us, that we should draw some parallel between Mr. Barrymore's style and manner of acting the character, and that of his predecessor. The part itself is

of a two-fold complexion. In the first acts, its prevailing character is cool, even, and collected. In the latter it assumes a more violent and highly impassioned tone. Hence it requires two distinct features, two distinct modes of expression, in the representation. Where the scene calls for high-wrought action, and declamatory vehemence, Mr. Barrymore approves himself no unapt personifier; but he falls greatly short of Mr. Murray, where manly composure and dignified demeanour constitute the leading traits. He does not impart that degree of interest to his colloquies with *Amelia*, which Mr. Murray so successfully transfuses into his performance; but he does justice to the convulsive scene in which, in the person of *Frederic*, he recognizes his own son, and rises in his manner, in the same proportion as the character rises in energy and strength.

We have next to contemplate him, as the representative of *Eustache de St. Pierre*, in the *Surrender of Calais*. Here Mr. Barrymore steps forward, as the successor to young Kemble; and certainly in this character he gains considerably by comparison. The unqualified rant, the total lack of judgment, and the puerile ostentation of Mr. C. Kemble's manner could not fail to inspire every intelligent spectator with disgust. Whenever he aimed at being more than ordinarily energetic, he raised his voice to a pitch of vociferation, that rendered the audience apprehensive of the bursting of a blood-vessel. Indeed his whole style of acting in this character, exhibited the semblance of a vapouring Hector, a braggart, and a bully, rather than that of a blunt warrior, a virtuous patriot, offering himself up as a sacrifice for the salvation of his country. Mr. Barrymore displays more coolness, more firmness, more manliness, more dauntless, and unshaken intrepidity.

MISS CHAPMAN.

As an actress, this lady is qualified to move but in a very circumscribed sphere. Her manner is cold, unfeeling, and inanimate; nay, we might almost say, petrifying. She has appeared this season in one of Miss De Camp's characters, as *Elinor*, in Boaden's motley play of *Cambro-Britons*. She makes a good *breeches figure*; but possesses very little *feminine* attraction. Not her's the look which charms, captivates, and inspires the tender passion! Not her's the smiles, in which the "Loves and Graces dwell!" where Cupid lurks in ambush, and spreads his amorous toils to ensnare the unguarded heart! In some of her characters she is absolutely *ghastly*; witness her *Agatha Friburg*, in *Lovers' Vows*, which conveys no unapt idea of *Hecate*! She has, however, the merit of being generally correct, and seldom needs the intervention of the prompter.

MR. EMERY.

This performer boasts a considerable portion of talent, and might attain to a still greater degree of ascendancy, as a *general actor*, were he capable of relaxing his natural austerity, and moulding his harsh and ferocious features to the expression of good-humour and complacency. In the cast of *vulgar old men*, and *acerb clowns*, he appears to great advantage; but he wants Munden's drollery and archness of look, and still more Munden's flexibility of face, to excel equally in ludicrous and pleasant characters. His Yorkshire clowns are excellent; witness his *Lump* in the *Review*. In consequence of Munden's secession from the Haymarket boards, Mr. Emery has succeeded to several of that actor's parts. His *Shenkin*, in *Cambro-Britons*, is ably sustained; but as the representative of *Old Dornton*, in the *Road to Ruin*, (which forms, indeed, one of Munden's best parts,) he exhibits a lamentable

mentable falling-off. His *Verdun*, in *Lovers' Vows*, has merit, and might please abstractedly; but it suffers by comparison. It does not breathe that spirit of good-humour which Munden infuses into the part. With his *Clod*, in the *Young Quaker*, we were better pleased.

Might we take the liberty of whispering a word of wholesome advice into this performer's ear, we would recommend to him to study more assiduously the manners and habits of *genteel* life. He stands materially in his own light, and greatly impedes his own preferment, by cultivating unprofitable connexions, and *strengthening*, instead of *correcting* low propensities.

MR. FARLEY.

On the second representation of the *Point of Honour*, this gentleman sustained the part of *Valcour*, vice Mr. Fawcett; and it is but justice to add, to the no small improvement of the performance. Mr. Fawcett's voice is too harsh and dissonant, nor does he possess a competent share of *flippancy*, to accord with so gay and volatile a character. In *Lovers' Vows*, Mr. Farley acts as Mr. Knight's substitute in the part of *Count Cassel*; and though he falls greatly short of that gentleman, whose manner he most avowedly copies, yet is it no mean merit not to offend, in the bold attempt to approximate to such consummate excellence.

MR. FAWCETT.

When we duly appreciate and consider the vast weight of business, which already rests on Mr. Fawcett, as acting-manager, in the first instance; and secondly as the main pillar and strength of the company in the comic department, it is rather a matter of astonishment that he should be able to go through, and satisfactorily perform his ordinary and established line of duty, than that he should not

unne-

unnecessarily encumber himself with fresh and additional characters; except when occasions of paramount necessity, such as the production of new comic pieces, occur, in which the author generally places his chief hopes of success in Mr. Fawcett's exertions. On casting up the total of the month's performances, we find that Mr. Fawcett's nights of *actual* duty, independant of his managerial functions, bear to his opportunities of leisure, the average proportion of 24 to 4. Hence it results, that were Mr. Fawcett even inclined to extend his range of characters he would scarcely be able to accomplish his design. Independant of the part of *Rincon*, in the *Gipsy Prince*, on which we shall anon debate; he has, this season, supported, for the first time, the character of *Young Sadboy*, in the *Young Quaker*; and it is almost superfluous to add, with considerable success.

MRS. GIBBS.

No less than three additional characters have devolved upon this actress, in consequence of Miss De Camp's secession from this theatre. Her *Bertha**, in the *Point of Honour*, is nearly on *a par* with the original representation. But we cannot report so favourably of her *Rosa*, in the popular pantomime of *Obi*; or *Three-finger'd Jack*. Her symmetry, especially when she appears as a *breeches figure*, is obviously defective. As well about the *mammillary*, as the *umbilical* regions, and still more conspicuously so, about that part, from which the famous *Venus Callipygos**

* Mrs. Gibbs having a *cast* in the comedy of the *Poor Gentleman*, performed at Covent-Garden on the opening night of the Haymarket Theatre, the part of *Bertha* was for that evening sustained by Miss Murray.

* Venus, ob *pulchras clunes* ita dicta. See likewise *Canticles*, chap. viii. ver. 2.

deduces

deduces her title, she is all that *woman* should be!—All that *man* can reasonably desire! But her *lower*, bear no proportion to her *upper* parts. Her thighs and legs have not that swell, that plumpness, that rotundity, which we should naturally expect from her general appearance. Nor is she such a proficient, in the science of graceful attitudes, as Miss De Camp. Her *Dinah Primrose*, in the *Young Quaker*,—a character for which the striking innocence of her look eminently qualifies her, exhibits a very fair and promising specimen of her abilities.

MR. H. JOHNSTON.

We still perfectly remember this gentleman's original *debut* at this theatre, in the drama of the *Inquisitor*,—a drama, in our opinion, which experienced, when its pretensions are weighed in the balance of just criticism, and contrasted with the prevailing character of our more modern theatrical productions, a fate altogether harsh and unmerited. He has returned to the Haymarket boards, not as a *passive*, but, on the contrary, as a peculiarly *active* member of the company. *Henry Moreland*, in the *Heir at Law*; *Adelbert*, in *Sighs, or the Daughter*; *Prince David*, in *Cambro-Britons*; *Lealto*, in *False and True*; and lastly, the *sable hero*, in the pantomime of *Obi*, or *Three-finger'd Jack*, are among the number of parts which he has sustained, as the substitute for Mr. C. Kemble; and certainly it is but feeble praise when we add, the performance of these parts has reaped considerable advantage from the exchange. Exclusive of the above list, he has performed the characters of *Frederic*, in *Lovers' Vows*, and *Ribbomont*, in the *Surrender of Calais*. We have only to express our regret, that he should degrade his talents, by *figuring in pantomime!*

MRS.

MRS. H. JOHNSTON.

This lady's merit in the part of *Amelia*, in *Lovers' Vows*, (of which she is the original representative,) is sufficiently known, and admitted, to supersede all comment. In Mr. Hoare's comedy of *Sighs*, or the *Daughter*, she sustained the character of *Josephine*, in the room of Miss De Camp. There is in her style of acting a degree of artless simplicity, or *naïveté*, peculiarly interesting; and which, added to a genteel figure, an intelligent countenance, and a pleasing tone of voice, never fails to conciliate the goodwill and favour of the audience.

MRS. LITCHFIELD.

When, reflecting on the narrow and circumscribed limits necessarily prescribed to this lady, in the *dramatic walk*, we connect her professional character with the peculiar economy of the *Summer Theatre*, we must candidly confess, her engagement at the Haymarket Theatre appears to us a most inexplicable paradox. Nearly one half of the season is now expired;—during all this time but one character has this lady sustained, and that character performed but twice. If the manager has not over-shot his mark, and committed a glaring error in his calculation of the benefit likely to accrue to the treasury from this lady's co-operation, we are most woefully mistaken. Her *Julia*, in the *Surrender of Calais*, is certainly greatly inferior to Miss De Camp's performance, and we justly consider it as no small compliment to the talents of the latter, that such a number of substitutes have been put into a state of requisition, to supply her individual loss. Mrs. Litchfield has, however, the merit of dressing the character well.

MRS. MILLS.

In gay, sprightly, volatile characters, especially where *dancing* and *singing* go hand in hand, the merit of this lively

lively and spirited actress is universally allowed. As such she fills several of Miss De Camp's parts with considerable success; witness her *Patrick*, in the *Poor Soldier*, and her *Phebe Whitethorn*, in *The Review*. In *False and True*, she appeared as the representative of *Lauretta*.

MRS. MOUNTAIN.

This lady, by her rare association of *musical*, with *professional* talent, makes daily, and rapid progress in public favour and repute. *Caroline Dormer*, however, in the *Heir at Law*, which she now fills, vice Miss De Camp, does not appear to us a part exactly adapted to the peculiar nature and extent of her powers. Mrs. H. Johnston, in our humble opinion, would constitute a more satisfactory representative.

In Mrs. Bland's line, she appears to conspicuous advantage. Her *Madelon*, in the *Surrender of Calais*, obtained great and merited applause; and to her sweet warblings principally, is the new musical entertainment of the *Gipsy Prince* indebted for its reprieve, we might almost emphatically say, *under the very gallows!* *Janetta*, in *False and True*, and *Araminta*, in the *Young Quaker*, are among her new appearances this season.

* For an account of the New Musical Entertainment of the *Gipsy Prince*, see page 39.

N. B. Want of room compels us to postpone the remainder of our *Strictures*, involving the performances of Mr. JOHN PALMER, Mr. POWELL, and Miss TYRER, till our next; in which it is our further intention to give a *Review* of Theatrical Publications. Several very interesting Articles of *Dramatic* and *Literary* Intelligence, together with Notices respecting the *Fine Arts*, are likewise omitted from the same cause.

ORIGINAL POETRY.



PÆAN IMPERIALIS;

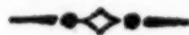
OR, A NEW NATIONAL THANKSGIVING ANTHEM.

The Words by *Mrs. CRESPIGNY, P. T. S.

The Music composed by THOMAS BUSBY, and performed for his degree of
DOCTOR in MUSIC,*Before the Vice-Chancellor, Heads of Houses, Proctors, &c.*

At Great St. MARY'S CHURCH, Cambridge, on Commencement Sunday,

July 5, 1801.



I.

SOLO. Master Cutler.

ALMIGHTY God! to whom we bow,
For mercies past, for blessings now,
Impartial Judge of all!

When

* *Cui non dictus Hylas?* This lady's ruling passion seems to be the love of *notoriety*—the common pursuit, indeed, of vain, but weak minds, that, conscious of their inability to acquire a name by fair and *rational* effort, are under the necessity of having recourse to singularity, folly, and extravagance. Our present heroine is of the most dashing order of *eccentrics*. She grasps at every thing, and sets herself up for an *universalist*. She is the *arbitra elegantiarum*, in matters of *taste*—witness her *Camberwell revels*, and her *barn theatricals* under *Oswald's* management—a very *Camilla in gymnastics*, on which account she has recently succeeded to the high and distinguished post of *Patroness of the Toxophilite Society*: and as a *psalmist*, she not only incorporates in her own person the joint excellence of her illustrious predecessors, *Sternbold* and *Hopkins*, whose peculiar manner she appears to have most successfully studied; but treads closely on the heels even of the *Laureat* himself, whom she is said to regard with an evil and a scowling eye, as holding an appointment, which she conceives to be the undoubted right and privilege of the *female* sex, and for which, therefore, we are given to understand, it is her intention to start as candidate on the very first vacancy, testing her pretensions and her hopes of success, in a great measure, on the memorable prediction of *Sternbold*:

VOL. I.

F

" God

When the presumptuous nations rave,
Wild as the wind!—fierce as the wave!
'Tis thou decree'st their* *fall!*

II.

CHORUS.

Sound, sound the trumpet, sound it high!
And may our strains ascend the sky,
Imprest with sacred love;
Through Heav'n's high conclave may they bear
Our thanks for such protecting care,
To Him, who rules above.

III.

SOLO. Master Cutler.

Lord! may the mercies we have known
Bow down our hearts before thy throne,
And wean us from all ill;
Incline us to thy sacred law,
From ev'ry vice our wishes draw,
And bend us to thy will.

"God will give *women* causes just,
To magnify his name;
When, as his people triumphs make,
And purchase *bruit* and fame!"

Psalm lxviii. v. 11.

Yet, with all her qualifications, strange and diversified as they are, and backed as they are, by the weight of *Sternbold's* authority, we greatly doubt, whether this lady would ever have been able to work herself into *notoriety*, had not fortune's munificence compensated for nature's parsimony, and most powerfully seconded the exertions of personal vanity, to give an imposing air to imbecility and insignificance.

* A parallel passage to these lines may be found in *Hopkins.*

"Yea, when the storm arose in sight,
When seas did rage and swell,
The Lord put forth his arm of might,
And straitway down they fell!"

And

IV.

*And may our much-lov'd Sov'reign be
 Protected, Lord of Heav'n ! by thee ;
 Oh may thy † *potent* pow'r
 Guide all his actions, guard his life
 From private foes, and public strife,
 In ev'ry future hour.

V.

CHORUS.

Sound, sound ‡ another solemn peal,
 While ev'ry thrilling heart shall feel
 Its gratitude to God,
 Who, § *shielding* our triumphant fleets,
 Decreed our enemies' defeats,
 Beneath his awful rod.

* This verse, for what cause we have not been able to ascertain, was omitted in the performance. Without subjecting ourselves to the charge of flattery and exaggerated compliment, we certainly may take upon us to affirm, that it is at least *upon a par* with the rest of the poem.

† There is a *potent*, and, as it strikes us, an inimitable beauty in this *pleonasmus*.

‡ Here we are sorry to observe our fair poetess falls infinitely short, as well in grandeur of conception, as in pious sentiment, of her model. Had she caught the true *Sternboldian* flame of inspiration, instead of *another*, and a *second* peal, she would have burst out thus :

“ *Seven* times a day I praise the Lord,
 With heart and eke with voice ;
 And whilst I strike the *seven-fold* chord,
 I make a *seven-fold* noise.”

§ We cannot refrain from objecting to the term here employed, as being not a little derogatory to the national character, and more particularly to the well-earn'd fame of our brave and gallant tars. This is the first time, for centuries past, that we ever heard of our navy standing in need of a *shield* ! On the contrary, we always understood, that our sailors delighted more in *offensive* than *defensive* operations. The incongruity of this phrase becomes still more glaring, when we couple it with the epithet *triumphant*, so justly introduced as the proper and distinguishing characteristic of our all-conquering fleets.

VI.

SOLO. Master *Cutler.*

If such poor beings may implore
Of thee, great God ! a blessing more,
Let wretched* warfare cease !
Strife and ambition far be hurl'd,
And thankful may the amended world
Have universal peace.

CHORUS.

Amen ! Hallelujah !

INVOCATION TO VENUS.

From the First Book of *Lucretius*, on the *Nature of Things*.

Translated by Dr. BUSBY.

In presenting our readers with this specimen of Dr. Busby's poetical talents, we have to express our hope and trust, that the writer, who, we understand, has made a considerable progress in the undertaking, will speedily favour the literary world with a complete translation of this philosophical poem, a task for which he is eminently qualified, as well by his natural endowments, as by his classical acquirements.

PARENT of Rome ! sweet Venus ! source of love !
Delight of men below, and Gods above !
Who gladst the earth, the sea, all things that lie
Beneath yon spheres that glide the spacious sky !
Beauty from Thee,—from Thee all being flows,
Life springs to light, and pregnant nature glows.
Thee, goddess ! Thee the winds and tempests fly,
Clouds at thy presence quit the bright'ning sky ;

* The sublimity of this epithet is superior to all praise. How would it have exercised the powers of a Longinus ! Indeed, the whole poem partakes of the same character. With what rapture must the learned auditory assembled on this occasion have listened to these heavenly strains !—strains, which doubtless will transmit *Crespinny's* honoured name with increasing lustre to the remotest posterity, when the Muse of *Sappho* shall be remembered no more !

The

The teeming earth exerts her genial pow'rs,
In fair profusion spreads her sweetest flow'rs ;
The smiling seas in gentle waves appear,
And glory gilds the tranquil atmosphere.
When youthful Spring salutes the cheerful vales,
And soft Favonius wakes his genial gales,
Pierc'd by thy flame, gay birds in ev'ry bow'r
Feel thy approach, and hail thy sacred pow'r ;
Exulting herds o'er laughing verdure play,
Rush through the rapid streams, and boundless stray.
Rapt into bliss by thy inspiring charms,
Thy sweet allurements and thy soft alarms,
All nature burns, thy pleasure to fulfill,
And waits enraptur'd on thy heav'nly will.
Through seas and streams thy kindly pow'r prevails,
O'erspreads the mountains and pervades the dales,
The bowery mansions of melodious birds,
And open pastures of rejoicing herds :
Darts through each kindling breast love's melting rage,
And all things renovates from age to age.

Thee, whom all Nature's joyous works obey,
Whose smiles from Chaos called primæval day ;
Thee, in whose absence ev'ry lustre dies,
All beauty vanishes, and pleasure flies,
Thee I invoke : inspire me while I sing ;
To Memmius' ear eternal truths I bring :
Memmius, sweet goddess ! whom thou deign'st to grace,
With all endowments to adorn his race.
For him, kind deity ! inspire my tongue :
And with immortal beauty grace my song.
Meanwhile, by sea, by land, bid discord cease,
And bless the world with everlasting peace.
Thou, thou alone canst peace bestow, for Mars,
Armiotent ! sole arbiter of wars !
Bound by th' eternal wound of love, reclines
On thy fair breast, and all his soul resigns ;

With

With fondly eager looks admiring lies,
 And drinks celestial transport at thy eyes ;
 Pants o'er those charms which ev'ry wish employ,
 Tastes thy ambrosial lips and sinks in joy.
 O, fairest goddess ! while thy heav'nly arms
 Infold th' immortal whom thy beauty warms,
 In melting words thy soft persuasion pour,
 And peace, sweet peace ! for mighty Rome implore !

SONG

By Dr. WOLCOTT.

(NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.)

FAREWELL to the maid of my heart !
 Farewell to her cottage and vine ;
 From these, with a tear I depart,
 Where pleasure so often was mine.

REMEMBRANCE shall dwell on her smile,
 And dwell on her lute, and her song ;
 That sweetly, my hours to beguile,
 Oft echoed the valley along.

Once more the dear scene let me view,
 Ere a wand'rer in sorrow I rove !
 Sweet cottage ! for ever adieu :
 Adieu to the DAUGHTER OF LOVE !

LINES

WRITTEN IN THE COUNTRY,

By Miss HEARD, of Drury Lane Theatre.

I.

In this lone shade, this tangled wood,
 While solemn silence rules the air,
 To Thee, the Giver of all Good !
 I lift my soul in pray'r.

My

II.

My heart with gratitude o'erflows
For blessings I enjoy:
Yet still a pang this bosom knows
Death only can destroy.

III.

That pang with resignation mild,
Oh! teach me still to bear;
To suffer like a dutious child,
And bless thy guardian care.

THE GIPSY PRINCE.

A MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT, IN TWO ACTS,
By C. MOORE.

IT were a lamentable waste, both of time and paper, to enter into a detailed *analysis* of a piece, which does not display one single feature of merit. The plot, if it can arrogate to itself that title, may be told in a few words. The hero, after a life of vicissitude and mishaps, becomes Prince of a band of Gipsies. In this capacity he arrives in the province of Mercia, in Spain, where he meets with a Jew, whom the officers of the inquisition are dragging to prison, for no other crime but his religious tenets. The *Gipsy Prince* achieves his rescue, wounding one of the officers, and putting to flight the other. For this benevolent, but rash act, he is himself compelled to seek safety by flight. He scales the wall of the inquisitor's garden, where he encounters *Antonia*, the inquisitor's niece. The young lady immediately falls in love with the fugitive stranger, and conceals him in a pavillion. He is, however, detected, and brought to answer his offence before the chiefs of the Holy Office. Here he turns out to be the long-lost son of *Dominic*, the corregidor; his crime is of course pardoned, and a matrimonial alliance concluded between himself and *Antonia*.

The super-structure raised on this flimsy plot is altogether as futile and contemptible as the plot itself. The dialogue has neither wit nor neatness to recommend it. The only attempts at humour are two or three miserable puns. Were we not well aware of the

extent of theatrical intrigue, and the low arts, by which the ear of the manager is gained, we should feel astonished that any caterer for the public (who is, or at least *ought* to be, a man of sense) could be prevailed upon to accept such a vile *farrago* of dullness and absurdity. But the author, we understand, has by a species of *political ambidexterity*, established a very beneficial connexion in the fashionable world. Our readers need not to be now told, that the upper circles, as they are pompously styled, do not always constitute the most rational and the best informed part of the community.

In the representation, little scope is afforded to the performers for the exercise of their professional talents. The applause awarded to Mrs. Mountain, is a tribute paid to her sweet, harmonious warblings, and reflects no meed praise upon the author. Kelly's monotonous squeak, when he *sings*, is, if possible, still less calculated than his *acting* (if we may employ that term on this occasion without prophanation) to recommend a piece to unsophisticated judges. When the efforts of Fawcett, in his own legitimate walk of broad farce, prove frustrate and abortive, as they did in the present instance, we may safely set it down, as an irrefragable proof, that the part is in itself good for nothing. Miss Tyrer, a pupil of Kelly, as the representative of a young gipsy girl, displayed a considerable degree of archness and genuine comic humour, as well in her stile of acting, as her singing. The rest of the *Dramatis Personæ* are little better than *cyphers*. A bare specification of the cast of characters is all that we need to add on the present occasion.—*Don Roderic*, (the Inquisitor) Mr. Suett.—*Don Dominic*, (the Corregidor) Mr. Emery.—*Gipsy Prince*, Mr. Kelly.—*Rincon*, Mr. Fawcett.—*Jew*, Mr. Atkins.—*Alguazils*, Messrs. Trueman and Caulfield.—*Antonia*, Mr. Mountain.—*Gipsy Girls*, Miss Tyrer, Miss Menage, &c.

The piece, through the powerful support of a strong and fashionable party, was borne through, in defiance of sound taste and the general sense of the unbiassed part of the audience. But it will never become popular, whatever may be the sinister arts employed to force it down the throats of the public.

* * * The *Title Page* and *Index* to the Fourth Volume of the DRAMATIC CENSOR, are unavoidably *postponed* till our next Number.